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Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

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Friday, 23 October 2009, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Le Luong Minh	(Viet Nam)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Kafando
	China	Mr. Zhang Yesui
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Turkey	Mr. Çorman
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Ms. DiCarlo

Agenda

The situation in Timor-Leste

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (S/2009/504)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Timor-Leste

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (S/2009/504)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, Brazil, New Zealand, the Philippines, Portugal, South Africa, Sweden, Timor-Leste and Thailand, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Guterres (Timor-Leste) took a seat at the Council table; the representatives of the other aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. José Luís Guterres, Deputy Prime Minister of Timor-Leste.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Atul Khare, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Khare to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2009/504, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Atul Khare. I give him the floor.

Mr. Khare: I thank you, Sir, for the opportunity to introduce the sixth report (S/2009/504) of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), covering the period from 21 January to 23 September 2009. I would also like to acknowledge the presence of the Deputy Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, Mr. José Luís Guterres.

Let me begin with developments since 23 September. On 7 October, the Council of Ministers approved the draft law on the 2010 State budget, which totals approximately $636.9 million. The Government realizes that it must diversify engines for economic growth and job creation while retaining a focus on addressing extreme poverty, unemployment, infrastructure creation and rural development. The Government has also invited the United Nations World Tourism Organization to send a technical assistance mission, scheduled for 10 to 21 November, to conduct a detailed review of that sector. President José Ramos-Horta, endeavouring to increase international interest and tourism in Timor-Leste, organized the inaugural Tour de Timor, a hugely successful cross-country bicycling race in which almost 300 riders from throughout the world participated from 24 to 28 August. On 12 October, he announced the inaugural International Sports Fishing Competition, which will take place in late November.

On 9 October, Timor-Leste successfully held elections for community authorities in a generally peaceful atmosphere with the United Nation police and the National Police Force of Timor-Leste (PNTL) providing security throughout the country. The provisional results indicate that about 67.75 per cent of registered voters cast ballots. These elections were more complicated and challenging than the national elections of 2007, since each local community required a unique ballot.

The ability of the electoral bodies of Timor-Leste to successfully organize the elections demonstrated

their increasing capacities and the public's continuing faith in democratic electoral processes. In comparison to the 2007 elections, UNMIT helicopter support was minimal, and it is expected that, by the 2012 national elections, such support might be needed only for emergency situations. There were a few minor incidents of violence, but far fewer than in 2007.

I compliment the Timorese electorate, which during practically all electoral rallies identified communal peace, water, electricity, roads and other infrastructure, as well as education, as its primary concerns. In at least one local community, the issues of carbon dioxide emissions, global warming and the ozone hole were also avidly debated. The integrated United Nations electoral support team, established by us and comprised of staff members of UNMIT and the United Nations Development Programme, enabled the provision of coordinated advice and support through a single window as One United Nations, and has provided important lessons for the future.

On 13 October, the National Parliament debated a motion of no confidence submitted by FRETILIN, the single largest party, and its ally, the Klibur Oan Timor Asuwain party, because of their opposition to the release of Maternus Bere. The motion was defeated by a vote of 39 to 25, with only one member of Parliament absent on the day of the debate. Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão took part in the day-long debate, which was aired on national radio and television. This debate was a positive step towards ensuring that critical issues of national interest be channelled through the National Parliament, with meaningful participation from the opposition. Of course, the legal issues surrounding the case can be properly dealt with only in a competent court. I was delighted to note that Prime Minister Gusmão said in his intervention that the "parties that make up the Alliance for a Parliamentary Majority have no special interest in an amnesty law".

I trust that all necessary steps, as recommended by the Secretary-General in paragraph 55 of his report, will soon be initiated. UNMIT stands ready to provide its assistance and support, including to the National Parliament. My Human Rights and Transitional Justice Section, along with the Serious Crimes Investigation Team, organized a workshop on 7 October on international criminal law, particularly as it relates to the situation in Timor-Leste, at the request of Committee A of the National Parliament. President of the National Parliament Fernando "Lasama" de Araújo has also indicated to me that the reports of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation and the Commission of Truth and Friendship, as well as their recommendations, may be discussed by Parliament following its debate of the draft law on the 2010 State budget in December.

Another important and positive development in relation to the 2006 cases recommended for prosecution by the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry took place on 9 October, when two defendants found guilty of assault and illegal carriage of firearms were sentenced to two years and eight months and one and half year of imprisonment, respectively. However, they were acquitted on counts of homicide, threatening violence and unlawful deprivation of liberty. It is my hope that fair trials will take place in the remaining cases upon the conclusion of the investigations.

I have consistently made clear in various forums with Timorese political leaders and civil society the United Nations firm position that there can be no amnesty or impunity for serious crimes such as genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. UNMIT continues to conduct investigations into serious crimes committed in 1999, as mandated by resolution 1704 (2006), in a highly cost-efficient manner. I agree with President Ramos-Horta that such investigations should also lead to the further capacity-building of Timorese investigators, in particular in the area of forensics, and will continue to make further efforts to closely involve Timorese nationals in the investigative process.

Strengthening the rule of law will require sustained efforts by the Timorese, with continued assistance from international partners.

I would like to commend the work of the four-person team led by Judge Phillip Rapoza in producing an independent comprehensive needs assessment of the justice sector. I have shared their report with the President, the President of the National Parliament, the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister, who is here with us today. The report was also forwarded by UNMIT to the Council of Coordination, which is comprised of the President of the Court of Appeal, the Minister for Justice and the Prosecutor-General. In conjunction with the strategic plan for the justice sector, the recommendations of the independent comprehensive needs assessment should be utilized as a contribution to a coordinated and considered

approach to justice-sector reform. It should also facilitate the identification and provision of the assistance that is most needed from the international community.

The resumption of primary responsibility for the conduct of police operations by the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) will continue with Viqueque district in the later part of November. As part of its efforts to support security-sector reform, UNMIT is also continuing to support the Falintil-Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste (F-FDTL), most recently through a media mentoring exercise conducted from 6 to 8 October for a select group of F-FDTL soldiers and civilians from the Secretariat of State for Defence, as well as through a training-of-trainers course conducted with national and international human rights bodies from 12 to 14 October.

I now seek the Council's indulgence in reflecting on a few issues from my perspective of the past almost three years in Timor-Leste that require consideration and guidance from the Council.

The dictum that there should be no strategy without an exit is well known. However, the reverse — namely, that there should be no exit without a strategy — is equally true. President Ramos-Horta and other leaders of Timor-Leste do not wish to be continually dependent on the presence of a Security-Council-mandated operation or on the deployment of international security forces. I also believe that the long-term sustainability of Timor-Leste's efforts depends on the ability of its own institutions to operate in a democratic, responsible and effective manner. At every step of the way, UNMIT and the United Nations country team have consciously endeavoured to work in a manner that enhances the capacity and credibility of the institutions of this young nation.

Nevertheless, our success in supporting the institutions of Timor-Leste, instead of taking the lead in any activity, can occasionally give the appearance that support is non-existent or irrelevant. That approach also means that progress is not linear, but depends on the pace at which institutions develop. Therefore, sudden improvements or deterioration should not be a cause for elation or undue despondency, respectively. What is required is a stable and steady approach.

The touchstone for success in Timor-Leste is not whether or not crises occur, but how future crises are met and resolved. The goal should be to ensure that they are handled in a responsible manner that does not threaten the State and that, instead, provides an opportunity for enhanced social cohesion and development.

The upcoming technical assessment mission to Timor-Leste should engage extensively with the national authorities, who are conducting their own review of the presence of the United Nations and international security forces, as well as with political parties and civil society members from across the spectrum. The future presence and role of the international security forces needs to be carefully taken into account in planning any modification of the composition and strength of UNMIT. The United Nations and the Government of Timor-Leste should jointly agree on the criteria for each step in the process of downsizing the UNMIT police and modifying the composition and strength of the Mission. It should be clearly agreed with the authorities, in advance of each stage, what support the United Nations will and will not be able to provide. No false promises should be directly or implicitly made to the Timorese authorities and people.

At the same time, cooperation with long-term providers of bilateral and multilateral assistance to Timor-Leste must continue to be consciously promoted. Unfortunately, I do not have time to present an exhaustive list of important bilateral and multilateral assistance, but I would like to refer to a few recent examples.

The Australian Government overseas aid programme's assistance to Timor-Leste has doubled in the past four years, providing, for example, over $9.2 million for water and sanitation projects this year alone. During the reporting period, the United States dispatched a unit of naval engineers to support the development of the F-FDTL's engineering capabilities and to execute humanitarian projects, in particular school rehabilitation and construction. The Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund Joint Programme (S/2009/504, para. 43) is fully funded by Spain. The European Commission remains one of the most important partners, providing, for example, funds totalling more than $5.5 million to United Nations agencies to support projects that promote social peace and stability. Portugal's largest project anywhere in the world is in Timor-Leste. It entails the deployment of 120 trainers in all 13 districts, who have trained more

than 3,000 primary school teachers and 2,000 secondary and pre-secondary teachers in the Portuguese language.

I must also acknowledge the critical importance of Cuba's medical assistance and adult literacy programmes, as well as the bilateral assistance of many Asian countries, in particular the member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Japan, a major provider of assistance on infrastructure and rural development, recently supported the *suco* or subdistrict entity elections with financial grants. Just two days ago, Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão announced China's additional contribution of 30 million yuan for the refurbishment of various elements of the infrastructure. Coordination by the United Nations with bilateral and multilateral donors, based on a strategic and measured approach, will be imperative in ensuring a common understanding of respective roles and responsibilities.

Timor-Leste, as a small and young island State, also has to grapple with the challenges of environmental protection. The environmental footprint of international assistance should, therefore, be as light as possible. UNMIT has been making continuous efforts to reduce energy consumption and to protect the environment. Those efforts have resulted in a reduction of 7.8 per cent in the use of generator fuel, which represents a savings of approximately $285,000, as well as a 15 per cent reduction in photocopier paper use over the one-year period ending in August 2009, as compared to the previous one-year period.

As I prepare to complete my tenure as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, allow me to thank the people and leaders of Timor-Leste for the gracious manner in which they have welcomed me amidst them. I have been touched by the kindnesses of President José Ramos-Horta, President of the National Parliament Fernando "Lasama" de Araújo, Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão, former Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri, leaders of all political parties and ordinary Timorese from all walks of life in Dili and in the far-outlying and inaccessible villages. I owe them a debt of gratitude for reinforcing my faith in the words of our Charter — better standards of life in larger freedom — that they constantly seek.

I would also like to thank Deputy Special Representatives of the Secretary-General Finn Reske-Nielsen and Takahisa Kawakami, as well as all the women and men of UNMIT and the United Nations country team, who, every single day, demonstrate their commitment to the high ideals of the United Nations and to supporting the people of Timor-Leste. Similarly, the support of men and women of the international security forces has been critical to our work.

Finally, I wish to thank the Security Council for its constant support and guidance. I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for having given me the opportunity to be a partner of the Timorese in their historic nation- and State-building endeavours.

The President: I thank Mr. Khare for his briefing.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. José Luís Guterres, Deputy Prime Minister of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Guterres (Timor-Leste): Allow me to first congratulate you, Mr. President, and your country on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month. It is a great honour for me to be back in this Chamber and to share with Council members our opinion on the current developments in Timor-Leste, as well as some of our ideas and actions for the near future.

The Security Council has been following the question of Timor-Leste since December 1975. Many decades have passed, and together we have overcome many difficulties and challenges. Today, we live in an independent, peaceful and democratic country.

On 12 October, democracy and accountability were put to the test in our national Parliament. Speaker Fernando "Lasama" de Araújo, the leader of the Democratic Party and a member of the current majority coalition, convened a session of Parliament to debate a motion of no confidence in the Government, tabled by the opposition party FRETILIN. Their stated reason for the motion was the unconstitutionality and illegality of the Government's decision to grant freedom to a former militia leader accused of taking part in the massacre at the church in Suai district in 1999. It was a lively debate that lasted almost an entire day, and it was broadcast live on national television and followed by thousands of Timorese.

Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão successfully defended the Government's actions. The motion was rejected by the national Parliament by an absolute and

solid majority. The decisions taken were based on the Constitution of our country and our national interests. The former militia leader was not released but was transferred to the Indonesian embassy, since he is an Indonesian citizen. As of now, he remains at the Indonesian embassy, waiting for legal procedures to take their course.

Before I came on 20 October, Minister of Justice Lúcia Lobato and I had a meeting with defence lawyer Sergio Ornay. He informed us of the two petitions he had delivered to the Tribunal requesting the release of his client for health reasons. No decision has been taken by the Tribunal to date. We commend the Government and the embassy of Indonesia in Dili for their understanding of the legal complexity of the case.

On 13 October, an independent comprehensive needs assessment team comprised of four judicial and legal experts from the international community, led by Judge Rapoza of the United States, published their report. Many recommendations were made; some will take many years to be implemented. Some are already included in the Government's plans. I would like to quote the conclusions of the report:

> "As noted throughout this report, a significant amount of progress has been made in developing the overall justice system of Timor-Leste. Although a number of challenges and needs continue to exist, the Timorese with whom the team interacted demonstrated a high degree of dedication and commitment. Although there is no question that they foresee the need for continued advice and assistance from the international community, they are motivated by a vision of a justice system run by the Timorese. This is a goal worth striving for and is a cause that deserves the continued support of the international community."

One of the major challenges we as the people of Timor-Leste have encountered was the crisis of 2006. Some 150,000 Timorese fled their homes and 65 internally displaced person tent camps were established in Dili and other districts. With the assistance of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, the European Commission, many countries and other partners, the Ministry of Social Solidarity was able to reintegrate all the internally displaced persons (IDPs) and close all the IDP camps this year.

The Government has invested its best efforts and allocated $35.8 million to provide support for their reintegration. Today, many of their houses have been rebuilt. We are now preparing to deliver the second phase of assistance to the 16,500 registered internally displaced families. By the end of 2009, we will provide recovery assistance for the possessions and assets destroyed.

We have also developed a social housing programme to support the elderly, the disabled, widows and chronically ill. A total of 450 improved traditional houses will be built this year. Next year, we will continue to expand this programme so that better housing will be available to our most vulnerable people.

We are also providing assistance to poor households to prevent malnutrition during the lean season. We have provided food assistance this year to almost 90,000 households. A special programme has been created for widows and single mothers, particularly those who are ill and whose circumstances prevent them from earning an income to support their children. Assistance is provided for them to purchase food, clothing and school materials for their children. As of today, 7,050 families have received assistance under this programme.

A social security programme this year will benefit almost 65,000 elderly persons and a total of 5,355 disabled citizens. The Government has allocated $16.25 million for this programme. From January to August of this year, 3,267 veterans and the families of the martyrs have received their pensions. The total potential number of beneficiaries is 12,540. The Government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Gusmão, believes that by implementing these social policies, we are also investing in the stability and social harmony of our country.

Social harmony and stability, the values of democracy and respect for the rule of law were recently demonstrated by our people in every village in Timor-Leste during the successful and peaceful Suku elections that were held this month. We thank the United Nations system, United Nations volunteers and the international community for their support. The Timorese National Electoral Commission did a great job in supervising the elections, and the Technical

Secretariat for Electoral Administration did a great job in organizing these elections.

Security sector reform has been a priority since the inauguration of the current Government. Progress has been made in the defence area. The draft national security law and national defence law are now before the national Parliament. The new Ministry of Defence and Security structure, the military police law, a military service law and amendments to the military service law were approved. There is ongoing discussion on the drafts of the new Falintil-Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste structure, the concept and system of training and the new concept of employment.

A draft national security law is before the Parliament, laying out the roles and responsibilities of the respective forces. The process will lead to civilian oversight and professional defence and security forces. The United Nations and the Government have agreed on a mechanism to progressively hand over responsibilities to the National Police Force of Timor-Leste (PNTL). So far, three districts and one unit of the police academy have been handed over to PNTL control.

By investing in human resources and providing better infrastructure, equipment and salaries to our defence and security forces, we will help them fulfil their obligations under our Constitution. This reform is a long-term process. Some scholars and experts say that it may take a generation, but we are confident that we are going in the right direction and at the right speed.

In order to achieve lasting and sustainable peace and stability, we also need to invest in the development of the country. As a nation blessed with natural resources, we have allocated our own resources to the financing of the national budget. Petroleum and gas revenues have been our main source of income. The petroleum fund reached $5 billion in July this year; the fund's annual return was 4.17 per cent.

Just a few days ago in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Timor-Leste became a member of the International Gas Union to better protect our interests. Next year, we will establish a national oil company and invest in the creation of the basic infrastructure needed to develop our petroleum and gas industry.

Economic data of the World Bank indicate that Timor-Leste's economic growth rate was 12.8 per cent in 2008. This year, we hope to achieve growth of 8 to 9 per cent. The national budget for 2010 will be debated in the national parliament next month. A total of seven national priority areas have been identified: roads and water; food security, focused on productivity; human resources and development; access to justice; social services and decentralized service delivery; good governance; and public safety. We expect to maintain our economic growth. We will invest in infrastructure needed for development. We will create more jobs for our people. We will continue to invest in education, health and gender equality.

In order to improve budget execution, efficiency and professionalism in public service, parliament has approved a proposal by the Government to create a civil service commission, which is an independent body. Parliament has also approved a proposal by the Government to create a national anti-corruption commission to combat and prevent corruption in State institutions and in our society.

With all those systems and institutions in place and operational, we might say to the world that we as a people are saying a final goodbye to conflict and welcoming development with an open-hearted smile.

In August this year, Mr. Ramos-Horta, President of the Republic, took the initiative to organize the Timor-Leste Tour. That international cycling event took participants to the villages, mountains and valleys of our country. Thousands of Timorese came to our roads with warm smiles, welcoming and applauding participants from many nations. President Ramos-Horta has already announced that next year, Timor-Leste will organize an international fishing competition. Through such initiatives, we hope to achieve a new and better image for our country: that of a peaceful and caring people. We are ready to share with the world the beauty of our people and our landscape.

I would like to thank Mr. Atul Khare, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his great and invaluable contributions to peace, stability, democracy and harmony in our country. His weekly meetings with President Ramos-Horta, Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão, Speaker Fernando "Lasama" and opposition leader Mr. Mari Alkatiri are deeply appreciated.

I thank Deputy Special Representatives Finn Reske-Nielsen and Takahisa Kawakami and all

members of UNMIT for their continuous support. I have had the honour of participating with the Special Representative and his colleagues in the Trilateral Coordination Forum to discuss the security challenges and threats in Timor-Leste. We have learned much from him. We — and I personally — believe that the international community will continue to rely on his expertise, experience and intelligence. We wish Mr. Khare and his family a successful journey, whatever the missions or challenges they may embrace or encounter in the future.

Finally, as President Ramos-Horta has stated many times, Timor-Leste will continue to need the presence and support of the United Nations until 2012. We would like to take this opportunity to praise the countries and Governments of Council members for their support for peace, stability, democracy, transparency, the rule of law, gender equality, human rights, justice and development in Timor-Leste.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): I would like to thank Mr. Atul Khare, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his very important briefing on the progress of nation-building efforts in Timor-Leste. I also warmly welcome the presence of His Excellency Mr. José Luís Guterres, Deputy Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, and thank him for his valuable statement this morning.

First of all, our sincere congratulations go to the Government and the people of Timor-Leste on the ceremony commemorating the tenth anniversary of the popular consultation, held on 30 August this year. Over the past 10 years, there have been periods that have not been the best of times for the newly independent country; several huge challenges culminated in the crisis of spring 2006. However, the strong determination and efforts of the people of Timor-Leste, with the support of the United Nations and the international community, have enabled the nation to make progress towards being a peaceful and stable country.

We are encouraged by the steady building of democratic governance in Timor-Leste. That progress was well demonstrated in the recently held suco — community leaders — a elections organized throughout the country. According to our report, Japanese electoral observers were so impressed by voters patiently waiting to exercise their right to cast their ballots to choose their own local leaders. That is democracy in action. We hope that the democratic culture will continue to take root, not only at the national level, but also at the municipal and local levels. The valuable support provided by the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) for these successful elections is greatly appreciated.

It is a sound democracy in which political leaders can have an exchange of views and set forth their arguments openly in parliament. We appreciate and support the efforts of the Secretary-General's Special Representative and Deputy Special Representatives, while respecting the sovereignty of Timor-Leste, to maintain daily contact with political leaders and encourage them to resolve issues through the democratic process.

The security situation is moving in the direction of greater stability, with the assistance of UNMIT and its tireless efforts. We are particularly pleased at several positive developments, such as the closure of all camps for internally displaced persons without major incident, the judicial proceedings for the suspects in the 2008 assaults on the President and the Prime Minister, and the reintegration of the so-called petitioners. We agree with the cautiously optimistic assessment made by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2009/504).

The stable security situation has been made possible by the presence of UNMIT since its establishment in August 2006. UNMIT has been conducting law enforcement on an interim basis and helping to rebuild the National Police Force of Timor-Leste (PNTL). We are pleased at the recent reassumption of responsibility by the PNTL in three districts and at the Police Academy as the fruit of those efforts. Japan supports the approach taken: that the reassumption of responsibility by the National Police should be based not on an artificial timeline, but on whether it meets the stipulated criteria. We wish to see further progress in other districts based on that approach. It is important to emphasize a clear delineation between the role of the national police and the defence force, the Falintil-Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste (F-FDTL), as underscored in resolution 1867 (2009).

We certainly acknowledge the essential role that the F-FDTL played in the process of achieving independence. However, as part of achieving a stable and prosperous democratic nation, Timor-Leste must

deal with the challenge of defining the new role that the country's armed forces should play in peacetime and of maintaining effective civilian oversight. From our experience after World War II, we in Japan are convinced of the importance of civilian control of the defence forces as a fundamental pillar of the stability and prosperity of nations. We acknowledge the positive contribution made by the Secretary-General's Deputy Special Representative for Security Support and Rule of Law to the discussion in Parliament of the drafts of three security-related laws.

It is our view that United Nations support for Timor-Leste is beginning to bear fruit. Timor-Leste is moving out of the emergency phase and entering a period of transition on the way to achieving self-sustainable stability, the rule of law, a working justice system and socio-economic development. The country is enjoying sound economic growth. It may very soon be possible to review the structure of UNMIT, so that it can correspond more closely to the current needs of the country.

Naturally, some elements still require careful monitoring, and we must be prudent in order to avoid hasty action that might undermine the success we have achieved so far. We therefore look forward to the technical assessment mission that will formulate recommendations to be included in the Secretary-General's next report. It would be helpful if that report included a review of the role of the Mission from the mid-to-long-term peace- and nation-building perspective.

Lastly, I would like to pay tribute to the personal contributions of Mr. Khare for what he and his able team have achieved in UNMIT since 2006. We greatly regret that Mr. Khare is soon to leave the Mission and wish him well in his future endeavours. We are convinced that UNMIT will continue to do its best to support Timor-Leste in its nation-building efforts, building on the path paved by Mr. Khare. As a staunch supporter and a good neighbour, Japan will spare no effort to aid in a successful nation-building process for Timor-Leste.

Mr. Parham (United Kingdom): I would like to begin by thanking Mr. Khare, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Timor-Leste, for his briefing. I understand that this will be his last appearance before his departure in December, so I would very much like to thank him for all his efforts during his time as Special Representative and indeed before. I would also like to welcome Deputy Prime Minister Guterres to the Council Chamber and to commend his and his Government's efforts to deliver sustainable security and development to Timor-Leste.

As the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/504) notes, there have been welcome signs of continued progress during the reporting period. In particular, the successful holding of local elections on 9 October was evidence of the relative stability and security that Timor-Leste now enjoys, and of the capacity of the body politic to engage in the democratic process in a committed but peaceful manner. We also welcome the progress noted in the Secretary-General's report with regard to the medium-term benchmarks for Timor-Leste. We are particularly pleased to see the successful resumption of policing responsibilities by local police in three separate districts. It is especially encouraging to note that no increase in crime or disorder has followed this transfer of responsibility. We look forward to the continued transfer of policing responsibilities to the Timor-Leste authorities in the remaining districts.

The progress in this area is a tribute to the efforts of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) police component to help strengthen national policing capacity. I would like to express our gratitude to them and to the Governments of Australia and New Zealand for their valuable and ongoing work in this field. On security sector reform more broadly, we concur with the conclusion in the Secretary-General's report that greater clarity is required on the role and responsibilities of the national defence forces. The absence of such clarity has the potential to hamper the overall security sector reform effort. We are also encouraged by progress in the other three benchmark areas: justice and the rule of law, democratic governance and the concerted efforts being made in the field of economic and social development. This is all evidence of Timor-Leste's increasing capacity in these fields.

Notwithstanding the progress reported in a number of areas, I would like to take this opportunity to stress the importance of doing more, and more quickly, to address the issue of impunity for those found to have been involved in war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. We note the valuable work being carried out by UNMIT's Serious Crimes Investigation Team, but the focus must now be on pursuing this work even more vigorously and

processing outstanding cases more rapidly. We also continue to be concerned by the reports of human rights violations by Timor-Leste's national security forces. We urge that all possible steps be taken to investigate these allegations and hold those responsible to account. The protection of human rights and establishment of robust accountability mechanisms is of central importance to the development of sustainable democracy in Timor-Leste.

The Secretary-General's report confirms that a technical assessment mission will visit Timor-Leste to look at medium-term options for reconfiguring UNMIT. This will be an important opportunity to reflect on how best UNMIT can match resources to outstanding tasks, and we look forward to hearing the Secretary-General's proposals based on those recommendations. We recognize that any adjustments to UNMIT's police component should occur on a gradual, step-by-step basis, but it is also important that UNMIT's structure and size evolve to reflect progress on the ground, including the welcome improvements in the overall security situation.

Our goal should remain to enable Timor-Leste to stand on its own feet in facing the challenges ahead. Achieving that objective will require the continued engagement and support of the international community, including UNMIT. But given our overall objective, it is also right that the focus of our efforts is increasingly on the gradual transfer of responsibilities to the Timor-Leste authorities.

Mr. Urbina (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Atul Khare, for his presentation, and to pay tribute to him for his valuable efforts in support of the people of Timor-Leste. I would also like to express my gratitude to Deputy Prime Minister Guterres for joining us in this morning's debate.

An examination of the last decade in Timor-Leste shows us that there have been strong achievements with regard to nation-building and the establishment of peace. The country's security institutions are being strengthened, as demonstrated by the fact that the national police force has taken over security functions. The democratic process is progressing, as the presidential elections in 2007 have been followed by the recent local elections. In particular, we acknowledge the country's endeavours to promote socio-economic development and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) regarding primary education and health. Little by little, sustainability is being achieved in Timor-Leste.

Although progress has been made, two major concerns remain: the slow pace of strengthening the rule of law, and, as we stated in a previous debate, the development of an army for which we see no clear purpose. In regard to the rule of law, there are two specific events that we find disturbing: the continuing criticism of the judicial system, which undermines the legitimacy of democratic institutions, and the incident in which a refugee was handed over to the Indonesian authorities, flouting the established legal procedures. In the view of my delegation, the decisions that the political bodies adopted after this incident do not validate actions that undermine the integrity of the law. In addition to developing institutions, a culture of democracy and the rule of law must be fostered.

We also believe it is important to consider the role of the army in the context of security sector reform. President Ramos-Horta was kind enough to explain to us the circumstances justifying the creation of a military apparatus, and he also outlined his personal ideas on that respect. In this context, we urge the Timorese authorities to assign clear tasks to an army that clearly has little defensive utility. Its functions must therefore go beyond merely military activities. It must become an agent for change and play a structural role in the process of nation-building. Border patrols; monitoring increased human trafficking, in which Timor-Leste is becoming a transit hub; support for local communities; the construction of social infrastructure and natural disaster response are some of the tasks whereby that small army could pay society back for the sacrifices it is making with what are very meagre resources.

The successful experience of Timor-Leste holds important lessons for the United Nations regarding the role that the Organization can and should play in matters of peace and State-building. First, United Nations actions in Timor-Leste demonstrate the importance of making an early start in peacekeeping operations and peacebuilding tasks, and of strengthening the links between those two activities in an integrated fashion.

It is also important to stress the importance of United Nations post-conflict cooperation in building

and strengthening local capacities. That is what the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste has done with regard to security, justice and governance institutions in Timor-Leste, helping to guarantee a sustainable peace and the eventual successful exit of a United Nations mission through the consolidation of local institutions.

I cannot fail to point out that the case of Timor-Leste demonstrates the importance of forging a strong, dynamic and symbiotic relation between the international community and the leadership of local actors. The process of peacebuilding in Timor-Leste has been characterized by close association between the United Nations and countries in the region. The ownership and leadership of the people of Timor-Leste have made it possible to take strategic advantage of the assistance of the international community and to assume in a responsible and determined way the challenge of building their country. The Security Council and the Organization should assimilate and profit from the important lessons learned in Timor-Leste.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): We are grateful to the delegation of Viet Nam for having organized this debate on the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/504) on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). We also wish to thank Mr. Atul Khare, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his presentation. We also appreciate the contribution made by Mr. José Luis Guterres, Deputy Prime Minister of Timor-Leste.

It is comforting to note that the Government and people of Timor-Leste, with the support of UNMIT and the United Nations system, continue tenaciously to build a stable, democratic and prosperous nation. The climate of calm that prevailed during the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the popular consultation amply demonstrated that. It must be noted that the progress made in strengthening democratic mechanisms and the legislative and institutional framework of democratic governance have contributed greatly to that.

Indeed, the spirit of dialogue and the patriotic momentum resulting from the initiatives of President Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Gusmão in managing issues of national interest — initiatives endorsed by the political opposition during the consideration of draft laws in Parliament — are praiseworthy and demonstrates the resolve of political actors to put national interest above narrow partisan considerations. We hope that the momentum thus created will continue in favour of the further consolidation of national reconciliation. It behooves the people to become involved in this process, for it is ultimately they who will bear the responsibility for building the nation of their choice.

We welcome the strict policy that resulted in the screening and certification of national police officers, which is a guarantee for the credibility of the institution and will, of course, improve the climate of trust between the Government and its people. We also welcome the fact that responsibility for the maintenance of law and order has now been taken on by the National Police; in that regard, we agree with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General regarding the need to abide by the four criteria identified in paragraph 9 of the report and to clearly define the authority devolving to each of the forces operating in the security sector.

From that point of view, we welcome the strengthening of the legislative and regulatory framework governing the police, including the enactment of the new organic law. However, the definition of modalities for the implementation of the new legislation by the National Police and the United Nations police is essential if the desired results are to be achieved. Concurrently, all initiatives to strengthen the security sector must be implemented. However, those objectives will be achieved only if the various initiatives are approached in a realistic and consistent way and enjoy adequate financial backing.

Despite the many activities of UNMIT in many sectors, the promotion and protection of human rights deserve greater support, including in the fight against impunity, the enforcement of sentences, and the compensation of victims and their families. Regarding pending investigations, it is important that every effort be made to remove the obstacles that continue to hamper them. At the judicial level, the adoption of relevant legal texts, including the new penal code and domestic violence legislation, have led to significant progress. They now need to be fully implemented. We hope that the consultations undertaken by the United Nations Development Programme and UNMIT on the needs assessment of the judicial system will lead to the elaboration of a strategic plan and the development of a draft law on mechanisms for traditional justice.

The quest for peace and stability also involves sustainable socio-economic development benefiting the people, especially the most vulnerable. That is why it is essential to ensure that, aside from the relevant policies it has launched, the Government incorporate the Millennium Development Goals into its development programs in order to reduce poverty and improve standards of living. The momentum towards including gender- and age-specific needs among the basic needs of the population is praiseworthy and should be continued. Socio-economic development also requires job creation for young people, including those living in rural areas. We urge the partners and the private sector to continue to help the Government achieve its infrastructure and rural and human resources development programmes. The improvement of agricultural production, especially through modernization of agriculture, could in the long run serve as one of the most solid foundations of the economy and provide genuine investment opportunities.

Among the issues that remain to be addressed is the situation of internally displaced persons and families living in transitional shelters, who need to be reintegrated and rehabilitated. Finally, we are concerned by the recurrence of natural disasters, which are genuine obstacles to sustainable development. That is why we urge Timor-Leste's partners and the international community as a whole to maintain their involvement alongside the Timorese Government.

There is no doubt that considerable progress has been made in Timor-Leste. However, further efforts are needed in order to consolidate those achievements and to support the ongoing process in the country.

In conclusion, we must pay tribute to Mr. Atul Khare. As he prepares to leave his responsibilities as Head of UNMIT, my delegation would like to pay him tribute and wish him every success in the future. We would also like to pay tribute to all the personnel of UNMIT and, more generally, to the United Nations agencies for their determination to help the Timorese people in their search for peace, stability and development. We also welcome the valuable contributions made by neighbouring countries in the framework of regional cooperation.

Mr. Zhang Yesui (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation welcomes the presence of Deputy Prime Minister Guterres of Timor-Leste at this meeting, and we thank him for his statement. We also thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Khare, for his comprehensive presentation.

We have noted with pleasure that the situation in Timor-Leste has generally remained calm and stable since the beginning of this year under the leadership of President Ramos-Horta and his Government. The political dialogue among the various factions has further deepened, and ensuring social stability has become an important area of consensus among the leaders of the factions. There has been a reduction in various types of crime, and positive results have been achieved in addressing the issue of internally displaced persons. The National Police of Timor-Leste, with the assistance of United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), have been gradually taking over responsibility for maintaining law and order.

The key to an effective response to the various problems facing the country lies in actions being taken by all factions — in particular, the Government and FRETILIN — who must put aside their previous differences and work in full cooperation. We appreciate the efforts by Prime Minister Gusmão and Special Representative Khare to promote dialogue among the factions. We appeal to the factions to put the interests of the country and its people first and to seize the present favourable opportunity to restore peace and achieve development in order to lead the people in focusing their efforts on nation-building.

Attaining lasting peace and security in the country will require vigorous efforts to develop the economy and improve people's livelihoods. We have noted that despite the momentum of favourable economic growth, the situation still remains fragile. Problems such as poverty and high unemployment may adversely affect the stability and development of the country.

Against the current backdrop, we support the efforts of the Government of Timor-Leste, which, while continuing to strengthen social stability, is prioritizing building infrastructure and the human resources capacity by focusing on improving the economy and raising employment so as effectively to remove those factors that contribute to destabilizing the society. The international community should also continue to provide all kinds of assistance to speed up the nation-building process in Timor-Leste.

With regard to the mandate and composition of UNMIT, we have noted that both the Secretary-General and Special Representative Khare believe that at present we should maintain its current composition and that the reconfiguration of staffing and composition should proceed in a gradual manner. We support that proposal. At the same time, we also believe that in order to ensure public security in Timor-Leste, and in light of the reality in the country and the views of all actors, the United Nations should focus on building the capacity of the police sector for independent law enforcement and should make police training and the handover of policing responsibilities a priority. We hope that UNMIT, out of respect for the views of the Government of Timor-Leste, will eventually be able to pull out of the country smoothly. That will serve as a good example for the formulation of other peacekeeping operations and the implementation of exit strategies.

Both China and Timor-Leste are members of the large family of the Asia and Pacific region. We have therefore been closely following developments in the country and supporting peace, stability and development there. At a recent meeting with Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão, Premier Wen Jiabao of the State Council of China declared that China would provide Timor-Leste with 30 million yuan of gratis assistance. We are ready to continue to help the country to the best of our ability.

Finally, I will also take this opportunity to thank Mr. Khare for his outstanding contribution to maintaining peace and stability in the country during his tenure. We wish him every future success.

Mr. Çorman (Turkey): At the outset, I should like to welcome the Deputy Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, His Excellency Mr. José Luís Guterres, and to thank him for his presentation. We are honoured by his presence today.

I should also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2009/504) and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Atul Khare, not only for his presentation today, but also for his tireless efforts in assisting Timor-Leste. I should like to seize this opportunity to praise Mr. Khare for the outstanding contribution he has made at the head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and to wish him every success in his future endeavours.

It is thanks not only to UNMIT but also, obviously, to the resilience and determination of the people and Government of Timor-Leste that on 30 August the country celebrated the tenth anniversary of the popular consultation that led to its independence. We praise the Government for having made such a peaceful celebration possible only three years after the 2006 crisis and a year and a half on from the dreadful attacks on the President and Prime Minister. That considerable stabilization has enabled the Timorese to address such key issues as the further strengthening of State institutions and democratic governance, as well as the adoption of important legislation to fight corruption.

We welcome the fact that local elections were held successfully and without major incidents on 9 October 2009, proving that the Timorese people are committed to democracy and that the political parties are demonstrating respect for democratic principles and processes.

We are also glad to see that the security situation in Timor-Leste has been steadily improving since February of last year, with substantial progress in addressing the situation of internally displaced persons (IDPs). We are quite pleased that all 65 IDP camps in Dili and Baucau had been officially closed by the end of August. We hope that the process of handing over policing responsibilities from UNMIT to the Timorese national police will continue to be as smooth as it has been so far. In that respect, we are pleased to note that the resumption of primary police responsibilities by the National Police of Timor-Leste (PNTL) in three districts and at the police training centre has not led to an increase in criminal activities.

We continue to support the Secretary-General's gradual approach in this matter and welcome further progress achieved in the registration, screening and certification programme for the PNTL in accordance with the policing arrangements. Further progress to enhance security sector reform, internal security and national defence, as well as the adoption of a national security strategy, are of utmost importance. Improving the justice sector and its institutions is of equal importance.

Despite these considerable achievements, the main issues that contributed to the 2006 crisis, as mentioned in the Secretary-General's report — such as poverty, unemployment, the lack of an effective land

and property regime and a weak judicial system — continue to pose significant challenges, and they need to be thoroughly addressed in order to anchor stability in Timor-Leste.

Given the progress that has been achieved so far, we are confident that Timor-Leste will eventually overcome all these challenges. However, this requires continued national dialogue and unity. Therefore, we join the Secretary-General in encouraging the parliament and the Government to continue efforts at broad consultations. We also believe that Timor-Leste requires continued support from the international community in its quest for peace, stability and prosperity. We thus agree with the Secretary-General's recommendation that the present strength and composition of UNMIT should be maintained. The recommendations of the technical assessment mission expected to visit Timor-Leste in January of next year will be crucial for evaluating possible adjustments in UNMIT's mandate and strength.

Let me conclude by saluting once more the owners of the normalization process, namely the Timorese people and Government, and by wishing them continued success.

Mr. Rugunda (Uganda): We join other Council members in welcoming the Deputy Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, His Excellency Mr. José Luis Guterres. We thank him for his statement. We also thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Atul Khare, for his briefing.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/504) and the statement we just heard from the Deputy Prime Minister show that positive progress is being made in Timor-Leste. However, it is clear that, despite the progress, there is a need to continue to focus on key strategic areas.

We are pleased to note that the process of security sector reform in Timor-Leste is progressing well, especially with the commencement of the gradual transfer of policing responsibilities to Timorese police. We remain hopeful that further progress will be made to facilitate completion of the transfer, as per the agreed criteria. Every effort should be made to support the Timorese police in achieving the key criteria, especially in terms of operational and logistical requirements.

We also note that, while efforts to enhance the development of the Timorese military continue, not much progress has been made. We therefore share the observation of the Secretary-General that finding a meaningful role for the Timorese military in a peacetime setting and clarifying its relationship with the Timorese police and establishing accountability mechanisms remain key challenges for the Government.

These are issues that will have to be resolved in order to ensure that the long-term stability of the country is achieved.

Internal displacement is a matter of concern and interest to Uganda. We are happy to note that the improved security situation has contributed to the progress that has been made in addressing the situation of internally displaced persons, especially in Dili and Baucau. However, there is need to address potentially destabilizing recovery issues, such as those relating to housing conditions and land and property.

On the administration of justice, we note the potential repercussions of the release of Martenus Bere. The fact that a vote of no confidence motion was submitted against the Government points to how politically sensitive this matter is considered to be by sectors of the Timorese people. It is critical that deliberate efforts be made to ensure that impunity is not condoned.

It is important that the Government of Timor-Leste take primary responsibility for the economic recovery, security and development of the country, with the support of the international community. The international community should support and facilitate national institutional development, with a view to ensuring that there is local capacity to play a leadership role on all aspects of national development. That is key to the sustainable national development of the country. We welcome, therefore, the Timorese people's increased leadership in and ownership of the national development process.

Finally, we commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Khare, and the entire staff of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) for the efforts they have made in delivering on UNMIT's mandate.

This being Mr. Atul Khare's last appearance before the Council in his capacity as head of UNMIT,

Uganda pays special tribute to him for his dedication and commitment in support of the people of Timor-Leste. Mr. Khare has made an important contribution, and we wish him all the very best in his future endeavours.

Mr. Dolgov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We too are grateful to Mr. Atul Khare, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, for his presentation of the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) (S/2009/504) and for his analysis of the situation in the country. We also thank, Mr. José Luis Guterres, Deputy Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, for his comprehensive statement.

This year, the people of Timor-Leste commemorated the tenth anniversary of the popular referendum in a situation of stability and security. We congratulate the people and the leaders of Timor-Leste on that noteworthy event. During the process of building a State, Dili was faced with serious challenges and crises, but, with the effective support of the United Nations and the international community, the young State overcame these and many other difficulties.

We note with satisfaction the substantial progress that has been achieved in overcoming the consequences of the 2006 crisis. This has provided an opportunity to advance national dialogue and reconciliation. This month saw the successful holding of elections for community authorities, with the assistance of UNMIT. The time has come to tackle other priority tasks to strengthen this young independent State: strengthening State and security institutions; establishing the rule of law and public order; enhancing the judicial system; ensuring social and economic development; eradicating poverty; creating jobs for the population; and improving the human rights situation. Those objectives will be achieved only if efforts are pooled and if there is cooperation among all the country's political forces and civil society.

Strengthening the national security forces is of priority importance for restoring stability in Timor-Leste and constitutes an important indicator of the independence of that State. We welcome the start of the process of transferring law and order responsibilities from UNMIT to the Timorese police. It is significant that the transfer timetable is being implemented on the basis of mutually agreed criteria with respect to readiness rather than on the basis of artificial deadlines.

Despite the progress that has been achieved in a number of areas, including with respect to security and stability — thanks in large part to the United Nations presence — this is fragile. A potential threat is posed by social and economic difficulties, impunity, human rights problems, the weakness of the judicial system and other emerging risks. Taking that into account, we share the assessment of the Secretary-General regarding the utility of maintaining United Nations Mission levels until the end of the Mission's current mandate. We await further recommendations on the reconfiguration of the Mission in the Secretary-General's next report.

We wish to convey to the head of UNMIT, Mr. Atul Khare, and to the Mission staff our gratitude for their professionalism and selfless efforts in fulfilling their mandate. As we understand it, Mr. Khare's work in this position is coming to an end, and we wish to wish him every possible success and fruitful activities in his future endeavours. We are convinced that his contributions will again be required within the United Nations system.

UNMIT's police component includes Russian police officers. My country will continue to support the activities of this Mission and its cooperation with the authorities and people of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Vilović (Croatia): Croatia deeply appreciates the personal participation of Deputy Prime Minister José Guterres in our deliberations and would like to thank both him and Special Representative Atul Khare for their contributions in today's debate on Timor-Leste.

Croatia aligns itself with the statement of the European Union to be delivered later.

Croatia welcomes the Secretary-General's latest progress report on Timor-Leste (S/2009/504), presented by Special Representative Khare. It is a very timely report, which comes on the tail of a very important juncture in that country's history. The tenth anniversary of Timor-Leste's historic vote for independence on 30 August represented a significant benchmark indicating how far the Timorese people have come in such a short time. We also remember those who lost their lives during the violence in the

aftermath of the 2006 crisis, including those serving in the United Nations Mission there.

We also recognize the crucial contributions that United Nations missions have made since the country's independence, as well as the tireless efforts of the respective special representatives and their teams in supporting Timorese-led nation-building efforts. We reaffirm our full support for the people of Timor-Leste and urge them not waiver from their important endeavours in the face of the current political, institutional and socio-economic challenges.

We meet today, at a time when the security situation in Timor-Leste has remained calm, to review progress in critical areas of focus under the renewed mandate of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) since February this year. We note the Secretary-General's assessment of continued incremental progress in the four mandated priority areas.

Ensuring the long-term security and stability of Timor-Leste is contingent on national security institutions functioning in a professional and accountable manner. Croatia is therefore encouraged to learn that during the reporting period that has been at the forefront of the minds of the Timorese leadership. We welcome their efforts for the institutional strengthening of security institutions, enhancing security-sector legal frameworks and stepping up efforts to establish a national security policy.

The Timorese authorities should continue to take full advantage of UNMIT's expertise while undertaking that process. If designed and implemented correctly, those reforms will allow for a comprehensive overhaul of the security sector, shored up by requisite civil oversight, the rule of law, transparency and enhanced mechanisms of internal accountability for both security institutions. It will further pave the way for an integrated approach to security and defence functions, while clearly defining meaningful roles for both the National Police Force of Timor-Leste (PNTL) and Falintil-Forças de Defensa de Timor-Leste (F-FDTL).

Croatia has listened with great interest to Mr. Khare on the progress in the transfer of primary policing responsibilities to the PNTL. While progress has been made in the resumption of primary policing responsibilities, it is important that that process continue steadily to ensure continuing public confidence in the current stable security situation.

As the situation evolves on the ground, Croatia fully supports regular reviews of possible configurations of the size of UNMIT's police component, to ensure appropriate alignment of its capabilities. In that connection we look forward to the technical assessment mission visit to Timor-Leste in the coming months and its findings thereafter. However, at this crucial juncture, we believe that the current engagement of UNMIT's police component needs to be retained for the time being. It continues to serve an important role in interim law enforcement until the PNTL has been fully reconstituted. In assuming an effective oversight role in districts already transferred to the national police, UNMIT could ensure that resumption of policing responsibilities by the national police continues smoothly and without incident.

We are encouraged by reports of progress achieved in human rights areas, including systematic strengthening of the judicial system and enactment of important legislation. We commend the decision by the High-level Coordination Committee chaired by President Ramos-Horta to conduct an independent comprehensive needs assessment. That should open the way for a coordinated and carefully considered approach to justice sector reform and help prioritize those areas requiring international assistance. We look forward to those recommendations in the near future.

However, the long-term consolidation of peace in Timor-Leste cannot take hold in the absence of a viable environment in which there is a credible and functioning judiciary and penal system and in which the rule of law prevails.

The successful holding of local elections on 9 October represented another important benchmark in the country's progress towards a culture of political dialogue and democratic governance. We hope that the people of Timor-Leste will use it as positive momentum to further drive forward its democratic process in which national dialogue is a central tenet.

Furthermore, Croatia commends the Timorese leadership for their accomplishments to date towards resolving an important residual challenge from the 2006 crisis, namely that of internally displaced persons (IDPs). We particularly welcome the news that the Government has closed the camps in Dili and Baucau.

Bearing in mind the serious socio-economic challenges Timor-Leste faces today, it is essential for the long-term consolidation of the country's peace and stability that more concerted efforts are made by the Government towards improving the quality of life for all Timorese people. Such efforts must also include durable solutions to alleviate potential destabilizing situations after the IDP challenge has been resolved. In that respect, perhaps there could be more focus on integrating more peacebuilding efforts aimed at social inclusion and cohesion for all Timorese people, through long-term sustainable development.

The Secretary-General, in his latest progress report, has highlighted the continued strength of the resolve of the people of Timor-Leste to build a more peaceful and stable future for themselves, especially since the crisis of 2006 and the attacks in 2008. To that end UNMIT has played a vital role in restoring and maintaining stability and in the crucial areas of security sector reform, democratic governance, rule of law and socio-economic development.

However, given that significant residual challenges from 2006 could pose serious risks to the long-term stability and development of the country, Croatia, like others, deems continued international presence and assistance necessary for the immediate period ahead. In that respect, the United Nations presence, under UNMIT's capable stewardship, can continue to play a critical role in providing assistance to Timorese-led State-building efforts in the four mandated priority areas.

Finally, as this was Special Representative Khare's final briefing to the Council in his official function, Croatia would like to take this opportunity to thank him for all his tireless efforts and capable leadership of the Mission. We wish him the very best in his future endeavours.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation is pleased to welcome Deputy Prime Minister José Luís Guterres, to whom we express our gratitude for the progress achieved in his country and the good relations that he has maintained with the United Nations presence over the last decade.

We also are especially grateful for the report (S/2009/504) presented by Mr. Atul Khare, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste. I take this opportunity to once again express our thanks to him and commend the excellent job he and his Office have done in supporting the Government of Timor-Leste. They have provided a comprehensive model worthy for use in United Nations efforts in other areas of the world. We express our deep gratitude for that and wish him every success for the future.

Just a few months after celebrating the tenth anniversary of the referendum in Timor-Leste, which laid the foundations of the country's independence, we are pleased to see a climate of stability and strengthened governance in that country. There is no doubt that United Nations support to the Government of Timor-Leste has provided the country with the opportunity to shape its own future. In this context, we believe that Timor-Leste should continue to enjoy the benefits of the presence and support of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), in order to continue to make progress on matters such as security, justice, human rights, development and democratic governance.

When the Security Council met to discuss Timor-Leste on 19 February (see S/PV.6085), Mexico stated that it was important to strengthen the machinery for transparency and accountability in the government sector. Today we welcome the fact that the parliament has adopted a law establishing an anti-corruption commission and that ratification instruments of the United Nations Convention against Corruption have been deposited. That will contribute to further strengthening democratic governance in that country.

We also commend the continued support of UNMIT in the process of transferring command to enable the National Police to assume the policing responsibilities thus far carried out by the Mission. We consider that complete transfer must occur once the criteria laid down in the agreement signed between Special Representative Khare and Prime Minister Gusmão have been met, with particular emphasis on United Nations certification of national officers and on ensuring that the National Police is accepted by its own community and is strengthened as an institution so that it can exercise real control.

We are aware that the road to strengthening the rule of law and guaranteeing human rights still holds many challenges. We support UNMIT's endeavours to support the Government in its institution-building and in implementing the recommendations of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation and the Commission of Truth and Friendship.

Mexico agrees with the report of the Secretary-General and believes that, in line with the United Nations position, there should be no amnesty or impunity for war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide. We urge the Government to cooperate closely with the independent Special Commission of Inquiry to address unresolved cases of crimes committed during the crises of 1999 and 2006, pursuant to resolutions 1704 (2006) and 1802 (2008). We also recommend that the Timor-Leste authorities intensify their cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

On the issue of internally displaced persons (IDPs), it is important to highlight the achievement of closing the country's 65 IDP camps. We support the Government's efforts to promptly meet the needs of the nearly 3,000 IDPs still in temporary shelters and to facilitate their return to their places of origin in an atmosphere of calm and reconciliation.

We also welcome the progress achieved less than a year ago through the signing of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2009-2013 by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Prime Minister. We trust that the Framework will continue to promote democratization and social cohesion and make it possible to meet the major challenges of unemployment, the fight against poverty and providing access to basic social services in the country.

I wish to conclude by welcoming the widespread atmosphere of peace in which the recent municipal and village elections took place on 9 October. This reflects the commitment of the people of Timor-Leste to strengthening democracy and its institutions. Mexico reaffirms its readiness to continue its cooperation with the Timorese authorities in this sphere, as demonstrated by our support in the preparations for and holding of the recent elections through Mexico's Federal Electoral Institute.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (Austria): I would like to join my colleagues in welcoming Deputy Prime Minister Guterres and thanking him for his important statement. I further wish to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for his extremely useful briefing.

Austria aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union later today. Let me nevertheless make the following specific points.

We were encouraged by the climate of calm that prevailed during the celebrations on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the 1999 referendum. At the same time, we would like to take this opportunity to remember those, including members of the United Nations Mission, who lost their lives at the time.

We salute the fact that the process of the return and resettlement of internally displaced persons has nearly been completed. We also wish to congratulate, as others have done, the Government of Timor-Leste on the successful conduct of the recent elections at the community level.

We welcome the efforts to promote inclusive dialogue and national reconciliation. For these endeavours to be successful, some of the root causes of the 2006 crisis still need to be fully tackled. Timor-Leste continues to face important challenges in reducing poverty and creating new employment opportunities. The Government of Timor-Leste therefore rightly stresses that there is an increasing need to move from conflict prevention to a comprehensive development agenda. The United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) can play a key role in that evolution. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General has already drawn the attention of the Council to the important contribution provided by the European Union and its member States in this regard.

We support the authorities of Timor-Leste in their endeavours to build strong institutions that can fight impunity for grave violations of human rights. As the Secretary-General has reminded us, further — albeit as yet incomplete — progress has been made in holding accountable those responsible for criminal acts and human rights violations during the 2006 crisis. In that regard, we welcome the recommendations made by UNMIT, in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to strengthen accountability for human rights violations, and we hope for their rapid implementation.

It is important that the National Police of Timor-Leste is making and continues to make progress in resuming its primary policing responsibilities, including through the police training academy. We also welcome the swearing in, last week, of international prosecutors and clerks who can support the judiciary of Timor-Leste.

The successful re-establishment of a functioning rule of law system is crucial for achieving long-term stability. That requires the continued review and reform of the security sector at all levels. It also calls for the strengthening of the police and the judiciary, the adoption of relevant legislation, such as the new penal code, and a clear division of responsibilities and competencies between the police, on the one side, and the military, on the other. In our view, the military could, for instance, place greater emphasis on areas such as disaster relief and international peacekeeping. Those are also fields in which my own country has some experience and are areas of action where the armed forces of smaller and medium-sized countries might be able to provide appropriate training and advice.

Since this is the last time for Mr. Khare to brief the Council in his capacity as Special Representative, in closing, I would like to join others in thanking him for his important contribution to the peace process over the past three years. We have seen significant changes in Timor-Leste since 2006, also thanks to the work of UNMIT under Mr. Khare's leadership. The benchmarks that UNMIT has established will continue to provide us with an excellent strategic framework to assess progress in the four priority areas, and that in turn will facilitate the review, as well as possible future adjustments to UNMIT's mandate.

Mr. Dabbashi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to welcome the Deputy Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, Mr. Guterres, and to thank him for his valuable participation in this meeting. I would also like to express my gratitude to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Khare, for his briefing and for his very valuable contribution to peace in Timor-Leste. I would like to pay tribute to the efforts of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) under his leadership, which have contributed to stability and progress in Timor-Leste.

We have followed the developments in Timor-Leste with great interest, and we again welcome the continuing stability and calm in that country and the progress made towards peace, as reflected in the State authorities' response to the recent crisis and the measures taken to restore stability and security in order to continue working towards steady socio-economic development. We note with satisfaction the closure of most of the camps for refugees and internally displaced persons without any incidents, as well as the ongoing reintegration of the petitioners of the Falintil-Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste (F-FDTL) into civilian life. We note as well the adoption of administrative reform measures and anti-corruption laws.

We believe that it is important to devote greater attention to the post-reintegration phase in order to enable all citizens to earn a living and to enjoy access to basic necessities, such as water and other services, because that is one of the prerequisites for lasting stability in the country. It is evident that Timor-Leste has achieved substantial progress. However, there are still many challenges, such as poverty, unemployment, the lack of an effective land and property management. In addition, the State institutions remain fragile, including shortcomings in the justice and law-enforcement sectors. In that regard, primary responsibility for the adoption of a comprehensive approach to the four priority areas lies with the Timorese authorities. Those are security sector reform, State building and the rule of law, the promotion of a culture of democratic governance and governance, and socio-economic development, so that greater progress within the context of the medium-term strategy, in cooperation and coordination with UNMIT and the United Nations country team, can be achieved.

We note with satisfaction the efforts of President Ramos-Horta to strengthen the ongoing dialogue among the various political parties, as well as all segments of society. It is evident that the statements made recently by the various influential political parties and the measures that they have taken clearly demonstrate their respect for the rule of law and all State institutions. We hope that that constructive spirit will prevail so as to ensure that a democratic society enjoying peace and stability continues to be built.

During this period, it is important that we continue to strengthen and advance the State institutions, especially their capacities, in order to enable them to fully meet their responsibilities, in particular in the fields of security and socio-economic development and respect for the rule of law and human rights, and to ensure that understanding and tolerance prevail.

We welcome the Secretary-General's recommendations and agree with him when he states that much remains to be done in Timor-Leste (see S/2009/504, para. 53). That is why we support his

comment with regard to maintaining the strength and composition of the Mission at the current levels, and we look forward to the recommendations of the technical assessment team.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): The Permanent Representative of Sweden will shortly deliver a statement on behalf of the European Union, with which France associates itself.

Allow me to make a few additional remarks. First, I wish to welcome presence of the Deputy Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, Mr. José Luís Guterres, among us and to convey to him France's congratulations on the successful celebration of the tenth anniversary of the 1999 self-determination referendum. That anniversary is an opportunity to take stock of the impressive path taken by the country on the way towards independence, peace and prosperity. That success is primarily owed to the Timorese people and political officials. However, it would not have been possible without the commitment of the international community.

In that regard, I would like to pay tribute to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the occasion of his last appearance before our Council. In the many years that he has spent in East Timor, Mr. Atul Khare has worked tirelessly beside and for the people. Through his discreet but effective action to support the authorities, he played a part in the emergence of a new State on the international scene. Allow me to underscore the very positive role also played by neighbouring countries, in particular Indonesia, Australia and New Zealand, whose support has contributed to maintaining stability in the country.

Consolidating the progress achieved will take time. The events of 2006 demonstrated the consequences of a hasty withdrawal of the United Nations. The reassuring presence of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and the international security forces will therefore continue to be essential to stability in the near future. We are pleased that, as Mr. Khare has just explained, UNMIT's activity is part of a medium-term strategy aimed at having the Timorese progressively take over the tasks currently undertaken by the United Nations. With respect in particular to the transfer of responsibility for law and order in the districts, it will be possible in six months to assess the situation and draw the appropriate lessons in adapting the Mission's mandate, format and composition.

In that connection, we welcome the forthcoming technical assessment mission to Timor-Leste, pursuant to the demand made by the Security Council and the Secretary-General for improved follow-up to peacekeeping operations, particularly with regard to police activities. The technical assessment mission will also allow us to update the Mission's planning documents, pursuant to resolution 1867 (2009).

The Secretary-General quite rightly emphasizes in his report (S/2009/504) the importance to lasting reconciliation of combating impunity for past crimes. We share the concerns expressed by the Special Representative and reiterate our support for UNMIT's activities in support of the Prosecutor-General of Timor-Leste, including with respect to the Serious Crimes Investigation Team.

Ms. DiCarlo (United States of America): I would like to extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. José Guterres, Deputy Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, to the Council today, and to congratulate him on the achievements of the Timorese people. I would also like to welcome Special Representative Khare and thank him for his comprehensive briefing.

Timor-Leste has made significant progress since the political crisis and violence of 2006. Although the situation remains fragile, the Timorese commitment to peace is clear. It was on full display on 30 August, when Timor-Leste celebrated the tenth anniversary of the popular consultation. My Government welcomes the progress which the Timorese have made in the area of security, in particular in the development of a national security policy and draft security legislation, and we recognize the increased professionalization of the Timorese police and military, as witnessed by their efforts to ensure a secure and stable environment following the February 2008 assassination attempts on the President and Prime Minister.

The recent transfer of policing responsibilities from the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) to the National Police of Timor-Leste in three districts was a step forward, and we hope to see further such transfers to the Timorese police in the near future. We also encourage the Timorese, as they continue to develop their national security policy, to clearly delineate the roles of the police and the

military — an essential element of effective rule of law and administration of justice.

The United States is committed to assisting Timor-Leste to develop its security sector. We have increased our military cooperation and are currently conducting training exercises in Timor-Leste and neighbouring Indonesia. We are pleased that key Timorese decision-makers have accepted our invitation to participate in programmes at the Asia-Pacific Center on Security Studies in Hawaii for the second consecutive year.

Timor-Leste has also made progress in democratic governance and rule of law. We congratulate the Timorese on carrying out peaceful local elections and commend UNMIT for its support to this process. We also applaud President Ramos-Horta's initiative to open a broad dialogue with the Timorese people on priority issues. But a critical element of democratic governance is an independent judiciary. We therefore encourage the Government of Timor-Leste to continue its administrative reforms, including the development of legislative frameworks and a justice sector that establishes accountability for criminal offences and puts an end to impunity for grave violations of human rights. We believe that the recommendations of the independent comprehensive needs assessment of the justice sector could provide critical tools for reforming the sector and improving accountability.

Social cohesion and economic development are key to long-term stability. The recent closing of camps for internally displaced persons and the safe return and resettlement of those individuals are important steps towards reconciliation. Further, we acknowledge the progress that Timorese officials have made in addressing the national priorities outlined in the international compact for Timor-Leste (see S/2008/501, para. 36) and the measures the Government is taking to improve access to primary education, decrease malnutrition, lower unemployment levels and increase child protection. It is critical that the Timorese leadership continue these efforts to reduce poverty and create additional employment — a priority benchmark identified in the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/504).

For our part, the United States will continue to support the Timorese people in these efforts. We have provided $24 million this year to support an array of programmes, including in health, rural economic development and judicial reform.

Let me conclude by paying tribute to Special Representative Khare and thanking him for his dedicated efforts to advance stability and prosperity in Timor-Leste. We would like to wish him every success in his future endeavours.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my national capacity.

I welcome the participation of His Excellency Mr. José Luís Guterres, Deputy Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, in the Council's meeting today and thank him for his statement. I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Atul Khare for his briefing and commend him for his contributions, over the three years since he assumed his position as head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), to the process of peacebuilding and development in the country. As this may be the last time Mr. Khare is attending a Council meeting in his present capacity, I wish him still greater successes in his future endeavours.

We align ourselves with the joint statement of the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to be delivered by the Ambassador of Thailand.

We are encouraged by the efforts of the Government and people of Timor-Leste, especially in maintaining an overall calm public security situation conducive to the realization of the country's political, social and economic objectives. The period under review has seen, inter alia, the achievement of over 60 per cent of the socio-economic development targets set for the first and second quarters of this year, the successful commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the popular consultation, visibly improved legislative processes, continued dialogue and reconciliation, and the holding of elections at the local level.

These results have been made possible thanks, first of all, to the strong determination of the Government and people of Timor-Leste to move the national peace and development process forward. We commend the Government of Timor-Leste and President José Ramos-Horta personally for their commitment to strengthening national unity by building consensus; enhancing political dialogue, consultation, reconciliation and mediation; and promoting progress in addressing the situation of

internally displaced persons, a major issue resulting from the 2006 crisis. These measures, together with the endorsed parliamentary plans to intensify administrative and legislative reforms, combat corruption and enhance capacity, will enable State institutions to better discharge their challenging tasks ahead with broader public support. The active and constructive participation of people from all walks of life in Timor-Leste in the country's political process is more than ever of colossal significance in implementing these measures.

We highly appreciate the efforts of UNMIT in carrying out its mandate of providing assistance to Timor-Leste, including in maintaining public security, organizing local elections, and implementing legal and police capacity-building projects with a view to helping the National Police of Timor-Leste (PNTL) assume its responsibilities through a gradual and phased process. In this connection, we welcome the smooth handover of primary policing responsibilities in three districts and at the Police Training Center from UNMIT to the Government of Timor-Leste. We are convinced that reviews of this initial step by relevant agencies will produce useful lessons on how to proceed more effectively in the next stages of the transfer of police responsibility to the PNTL, ultimately leading to full ownership by Timor-Leste of its peace process.

However, as indicated in the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/504), the imminent challenges to the stability and development of Timor-Leste, particularly poverty, unemployment and the immaturity of security institutions, leave no room for complacency. Apart from the intensified efforts required of the Government and the people of Timor-Leste, the international community needs to continue to be committed to the cause of peace and development in the country, with priority given to strengthening the security sector and improving basic education, health care and nutrition, child protection and rural development aimed at meeting internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. In implementing UNMIT's mandate, especially in priority areas, its coordination with the Government of Timor-Leste and with other United Nations partners such as the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework should be further strengthened.

As a country in the region and a close neighbour of Timor-Leste, Viet Nam has always and will continue to support and assist the Government and the people of Timor-Leste in their cause of peace, revival and development to the very best of its ability.

I now resume my function as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Thailand.

Mr. Sinhaseni (Thailand): I have the honour to speak today on behalf of the 10 States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Viet Nam and Thailand.

ASEAN would like to congratulate Viet Nam, a fellow ASEAN member State, on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October, and on convening the debate on this issue, which is of vital importance to our region.

ASEAN warmly welcomes back to New York His Excellency Mr. José Luís Guterres, Deputy Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, himself a close friend of ASEAN. ASEAN appreciates his personal participation in the recent ASEAN Regional Forum held in Phuket, Thailand, in July 2009, and his message of commitment to strengthening relations with ASEAN.

ASEAN also thanks and pays tribute to Mr. Atul Khare, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, and to the men and women of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), for their dedication in supporting the Government and the people of Timor-Leste in the nation-building process. We join in wishing Mr. Khare well in his future endeavours.

From the beginning, several ASEAN Member States have contributed troops and police units to successive United Nations missions in Timor-Leste, including the current mission, UNMIT. That, in itself, is a testament of ASEAN's support for the United Nations on this issue.

I would like to take this opportunity to share ASEAN's views on a few points as follows. First, ASEAN welcomes the continued progress achieved in Timor-Leste in all four mandated areas of UNMIT, namely review and reform of the security sector, strengthening of the rule of law, promoting a culture of democratic governance and dialogue, and economic

and social development. We congratulate the Government and the people of Timor-Leste on having successfully held, on 30 August, the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the popular consultation as well as on having successfully held local elections in early October; we believe that these were important milestones for the country.

ASEAN is pleased that the overall security situation remains calm and that there has been substantial progress in addressing the two residual consequences of the 2006 crisis. In particular, we note with satisfaction that all 65 camps for internally displaced persons were officially closed without significant incident and the reintegration of the "petitioners" into civilian life has proceeded smoothly. We are confident that Timor-Leste will continue to move ahead in this positive direction.

Secondly, ASEAN is pleased that, since May, the national police of Timor-Leste has started to gradually resume primary policing responsibilities in some districts or units on the basis of the criteria for resumption that were mutually agreed between the Government of Timor-Leste and UNMIT. ASEAN strongly supports further international efforts, both in terms of bilateral and multilateral assistance, to support Timor-Leste in strengthening the capacity of its national police. We also support efforts to establish clear command and control arrangements between security institutions in border areas and to establish accountability mechanisms and civilian oversight of those security institutions.

Thirdly, ASEAN fully supports the strong commitment of the Government of Timor-Leste to promote the socio-economic development of the country, which has resulted in steady progress in areas of national priority. We also support the Government's commitment to mainstream the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) into its national development strategy. Here, we must not allow the world financial and economic crisis to adversely affect international assistance and partnership for Timor-Leste. As Timor-Leste proceeds with its nation-building process, development assistance from international partners is vital to help the country through this delicate period.

With that in mind, as noted by the Special Representative, individual ASEAN Member States are working closely with the Government of Timor-Leste in areas that are consistent with the latter's national priorities, such as poverty eradication, employment generation, food security, rural development, fisheries, infrastructure development, public health and human resource development.

Fourthly, ASEAN supports the recommendation in the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/504) that the present strength and composition of UNMIT, including its formed police units, should be maintained while Timor-Leste is undergoing the delicate process of security sector reform. Continued peace and stability will be essential for socio-economic development and efforts to lay a strong and durable foundation for democratic governance of the country. At the same time, ASEAN believes that we should be clear about the future role of the United Nations in Timor-Leste and about how best to ensure a smooth transition from peacekeeping to durable peacebuilding. In that connection, ASEAN looks forward to recommendations by the Secretary-General in his next report on possible adjustments to UNMIT's mandate and strength.

On a final point, which we feel is most important, ASEAN wishes to reiterate that the principle of national ownership should be, not only a principle that guides every facet of UNMIT's work, but also the ultimate goal of the international community in Timor-Leste. ASEAN strongly believes that it is of vital importance to ensure ownership by the leaders and the people of Timor-Leste of any strategy and benchmarks that the United Nations would develop for the country. We should all strive for a nation-building process that is a process of, by, and for the people of Timor-Leste. Here, ASEAN stands firm in solidarity with Timor-Leste as a regional partner and, above all, as a friend.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden.

Mr. Lidén (Sweden): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). Turkey, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Armenia align themselves with this statement.

The European Union congratulates Timor-Leste on the tenth anniversary of the 30 August referendum, which gave the country its long-awaited independence. The groundbreaking State-building effort that has followed since then is a major achievement, even if

many challenges remain. The EU takes this opportunity to remember the many Timorese who lost their lives during the violence at the time of the referendum. We would also like to pay tribute to those who have died while serving in United Nations missions in Timor-Leste.

As highlighted in the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2009/504), important steps have been taken over the past year to address the security situation and develop the State's structures, but the events of February last year were a reminder that the long-term stability and sustainable development of Timor-Leste cannot be taken for granted. The United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) will continue to play an important role in assisting Timor-Leste in the period ahead.

The successful conclusion of the local elections on 9 October was another milestone in Timor-Leste's democratic process. The manner in which they were held showed that important progress has been made in institutional capacity-building and democratic governance. We encourage the authorities to conduct the district and municipal elections in 2010 in the same spirit. It is also encouraging that the security situation in Timor-Leste has remained calm in recent months.

Substantial progress has been made in addressing the situation of internally displaced persons. The EU commends the Timor-Leste Government for its accomplishment in closing the camps for internally displaced persons in Dili and Baucau.

The EU concurs with the Secretary-General's view that, for the time being, UNMIT should maintain its current strength, including the police units' capability to assume interim law functions if requested to do so. At the same time, the process of handing over responsibilities to the national police force must continue with a view to setting the stage for a future transition and the drawdown of UNMIT.

There is a link between security sector reform and the eventual scaling down of UNMIT. We welcome the Government's efforts to further develop a national security policy and to strengthen security sector legal frameworks. The role of the national defence forces in a peacetime setting must be defined, and their relationship with the national police force clarified. A comprehensive and coherent concept for the entire security sector should be developed, including the establishment of accountability and civilian oversight mechanisms.

Another critical challenge in the coming period will be to build a sustainable socio-economic system that can create jobs and help fulfil the basic social service functions of a State. The European Union encourages Timor-Leste to make use of the Petroleum Fund for future investment projects and to stimulate the non-oil part of the economy, with a focus on job creation and infrastructure.

For the period of 2008 to 2013, the European Union is providing support of about €200 million, with particular attention paid to key public sector areas. The European Union aims to support labour-intensive work programmes, mainly through the implementation of the rural development programme.

We welcome the efforts to develop an integrated strategic framework that outlines goals and activities in support of State-building in Timor-Leste. Concrete benchmarks will enable the international community to further focus its assistance on priority areas and facilitate UNMIT's eventual drawdown. We also look forward to the revised national development plan signalling Government ownership of the process, which will give donors the longer-term orientation they need.

Since 1999, the European Union has provided the people of Timor-Leste with more than €800 million in development and humanitarian assistance. Our assistance will continue, and we look forward to an active partnership with the Government and the people of Timor-Leste in the period ahead.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Portugal.

Mr. Moraes Cabral (Portugal): Portugal welcomes the opportunity to be associated once again with the Council's deliberations on Timor-Leste. I wish to express our gratitude to you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting.

As previous speakers have done, allow me to extend warm greetings to Deputy Prime Minister José Luis Guterres and to express our appreciation for his valuable contribution to the present debate. Allow me also to thank Mr. Atul Khare for his very useful report.

Portugal of course concurs with the statement delivered by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union, but as a representative of a country that has had a long shared history with Timor-Leste, I would like to underline some specific points.

This reporting period was marked by the tenth anniversary of the popular consultation of 30 August 1999, in which the people of Timor-Leste expressed their strong will for independence. Despite all the difficulties, Timor-Leste has since then pursued the path of consolidating peace, democratic stability and economic development. Portugal commends the Government of Timor-Leste for its achievements in addressing long-standing security and economic challenges, reinforcing political stability and addressing the situation of internally displaced persons, thus surmounting the grievances of the dramatic crisis of May 2006.

In that context, I wish to underline the resumption of operational responsibilities by the National Police of Timor-Leste through a gradual process agreed with the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), which should be fully achieved in the near future. We encourage the Timorese authorities in that regard. Parliament and the development of political dialogue have also had an important role in reinforcing democratic governance and the consolidation of the State. The elections recently held at the local level were another milestone in the democratic process. We encourage further steps to consolidate the democratic institutions of Timor-Leste.

UNMIT played a central role in that process, actively contributing to the achievements in all four areas of its mandate: the review and reform of the security sector, the strengthening of the rule of law, economic and social development, and the promotion of a culture of democratic governance, including enhancing political dialogue.

Portugal concurs with the Secretary-General's view concerning the need for renewed dialogue across the entire political spectrum and all segments of society. We also share the view that long-term security and stability will depend on the capacity of the security institutions to function in an accountable and effective manner and with due respect for the rule of law and human rights.

The people of Timor-Leste have repeatedly demonstrated their resolve to build a democratic, peaceful and stable society. However, the consolidation of those objectives requires continued support from the international community. It is important that the people of Timor-Leste know that they do not stand alone when it comes to their endeavours.

For those reasons, we believe that UNMIT should maintain its current strength for the time being, including the police capability to assume interim functions. At the same time, the process of handing over responsibilities to the national police must continue with a view to laying the groundwork for a future transition and drawdown of UNMIT.

Another critical challenge in the near future will be to build a sustainable economy that is nurtured by a culture of accountable and transparent governance, creates jobs and helps to fulfil the basic social functions of a State. The elements introduced by Mr. Guterres to our debate in that context are indeed encouraging, in particular where economic growth is concerned.

Portugal has and will contribute consistently to those objectives as a leading donor within a large spectrum of areas, including governance and public administration, justice, education and security sector reform. We are also strongly committed to UNMIT; we have contributed 200 peacekeepers and fully support all areas under the responsibility of the Mission.

The continued presence of UNMIT is essential in order that the work in the consolidation of peace, democracy and development in Timor-Leste may be adequately sustained. May I also mention the most valuable work of the Special Representative of the Secretary General and, under his skilled direction, of all UNMIT staff. During the past three years, Mr. Atul Khare has done an outstanding job that will remain inseparable from all the accomplishments achieved by UNMIT. We wish to commend him for all his efforts and dedication.

Finally, allow me to offer the Timorese people and their democratic leaders our best wishes for success in meeting these important challenges, and to assure them of our constant solidarity.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this debate and for the opportunity to participate in it. I would also like to extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. José Luis Guterres, Deputy Prime Minister of Timor-Leste. His comprehensive briefing demonstrates how active the Government has been in addressing the many challenges faced by the country, with many positive results.

I also thank Mr. Atul Khare, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, for his briefing today and commend him for his outstanding work. Let me take this opportunity to pay tribute to Mr. Khare for his leadership and engagement with Timor-Leste and its people. When he concludes his term at the end of this year, he will leave behind a legacy of an extraordinary contribution that is reflected in the many accomplishments of Timor-Leste in consolidating peace and making progress towards social and economic development. I wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

As Timor-Leste and its many friends celebrate the tenth anniversary of the popular consultation, it gives us great pleasure to see that the country is moving forward and slowly but steadily building and strengthening the institutions proper to a modern democratic State. The Timorese can be proud of what they have achieved so far and remain confident in their future.

Such a positive trend is evident in the most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/504). It describes a significant improvement in the overall situation in the first nine months of 2009.

Of special relevance is the fact that the security situation remained calm and that the consequences of past instability are being addressed. The continued resumption of policing responsibilities by the National Police Force of Timor-Leste is particularly positive. We support the gradual and phased approach taken in this regard, based on criteria agreed mutually between the Timorese Government and the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). It is encouraging that, despite shortcomings, this process has not been accompanied by an increase in crime or disorder. Quite to the contrary, the average number of incidents reported each week has actually decreased.

The closure of all camps for internally displaced persons is a significant development from both the humanitarian and political perspectives. It signals progress. In order to firmly turn a sad page in the history of the country and avoid potential destabilization, attention should be given to aspects related to the return of internally displaced persons, in particular housing, land and property rights and income generation.

It is encouraging to note the continued engagement of the political parties in the democratic debate. The holding of peaceful local elections on 9 October, for which we commend the Government of Timor-Leste, is yet another step towards consolidating democracy. Democratic stability is key to ensuring prosperity, State-building and effective popular representation. We therefore congratulate political leaders and encourage them to continue to participate in the democratic process as the only way to successfully address the challenges facing the country.

Strong economic and social development is essential to consolidating these achievements. The progress made in meeting the targets of the international compact for Timor-Leste, the vigorous increase in non-oil gross domestic product in 2008, and the strong growth expected for 2009 and 2010 are excellent news. In the long term, consolidating the economy and reducing poverty will require significant investments in the productive non-oil sectors, as indicated by the Secretary-General.

It will also be necessary to increase and improve social investment. The measures taken by the Timorese Government to further improve basic education, health, nutrition and child protection and to stimulate rural development are commendable and should be supported. They are essential to the country's achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Brazil has contributed to such endeavours through bilateral cooperation in areas as diverse as education, agriculture and culture, in addition to justice, security, democratic governance and defence. We intend to further strengthen our cooperation, which will continue to be focused on helping to build much-needed capacity.

Timor-Leste's progress in a number of areas is certainly due to the determination of its Government and people. It is also a result of the unwavering commitment of the international community. This is the time for all of us to maintain this commitment, given that progress and stability are still fragile, as

noted in the report. Recent security gains should not mislead us. UNMIT remains a vital actor on the ground and will remain so until such gains are firmly consolidated. Brazil is convinced that, with our collective support, the Timorese Government will keep working intensely and effectively to that end.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of New Zealand.

Mr. McLay (New Zealand): I join others in thanking Mr. José Luis Guterres, Deputy Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, and Mr. Atul Khare, Special Representative of the Secretary General, for their presentations today, as well as the Secretary-General for his report (S/2009/504) on the situation in Timor-Leste. We particularly acknowledge Mr. Khare's role in overseeing the progress we are reviewing today, and we wish him well for the future.

For 10 years, New Zealand has been pleased to work with Timor-Leste, successive United Nations and international missions and other bilateral partners, and is proud of the role it has played in helping to build that new nation. We appreciate the comments by various Council members acknowledging that role. We are committed to continuing our assistance and fully support a continued mandate for the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

We have heard today of the considerable progress that has been made in Timor-Leste since we last met. The country is calm. Peaceful, free and fair village elections were very recently held, supported by the United Nations. Slowly but surely, Timor-Leste's institutions are growing in strength. There have been relatively few security incidents this year, and those that have occurred have been criminal in nature rather than resulting from any breakdown in stability.

The Australia/New Zealand International Stabilisation Force (ISF), is increasingly focusing on capacity-building and development assistance. At the same time, we recognize that the mere presence of that Force, like that of the United Nations police, provides a disincentive to those who might otherwise seek to foment unrest.

The National Police Force of Timor-Leste (PNTL) is taking back from the United Nations responsibility for practical policing, district by district. We will be watching with interest the resumption of policing in Viqueque next month.

New Zealand continues to assist the PNTL in its development through cooperation in community policing. Our pilot projects in Becora prison in Dili and in Suai in Covalima District are going well, and progress is being made in working with the PNTL and other United Nations police personnel to extend community policing approaches to other areas. We believe that community policing can significantly contribute to promoting a peaceful and harmonious society.

These are all positive developments. Together, they are helping to create exactly the sort of environment that the Government of Timor-Leste needs if it is to succeed in taking on longer-term challenges, including those identified by the Secretary-General. There are the challenges of building the institutions of statehood, developing effective and representative systems of governance and creating credible mechanisms for addressing justice and human rights issues. There are also the challenges of creating a strong economy and generating meaningful employment, particularly for the young. We need to support the Government in enabling the growth of a private sector, because only that sector can provide the many jobs needed in the future.

It is New Zealand's assessment that Timor-Leste is entering a transitional period. We cannot yet be fully sure that the current peace and calm equate to long-term stability. The unexpected eruption of violence in 2006 reminded us of the danger of making that calculation too early or too quickly. But it is equally clear that the country is no longer in a state of crisis. As the Timorese Government itself has put it, the situation is moving from conflict to development.

This means that, while the support of the international community is still required, the nature and direction of that support may have to evolve and change. It also means that we will increasingly need to call on contributions — multilateral as well as bilateral — from a wide range of international players with different areas of skill and expertise.

The United Nations has a central role to play in this changing environment. In our view, it must continue to assist Timor-Leste to strengthen its national institutions and work towards peaceful and credible elections in 2012. But to ensure that it remains effective, UNMIT must be allowed to evolve. It is vital

that the Mission remain responsive to the changing environment in which it operates.

In that respect, the upcoming visit to Timor-Leste of a United Nations technical assessment mission is timely, and we look forward to its recommendations regarding UNMIT's medium-term future. We do not wish to speculate as to the likely outcome of the mission, but we agree with the Secretary-General's report that any adjustments in UNMIT police numbers should be undertaken only in a gradual, step-by-step manner that helps to maintain confidence in the current stable security situation.

As one of the two partners in the International Stabilization Force (ISF), we also believe that any decisions made about UNMIT's future should continue to recognize the close interlinking of United Nations and ISF operations. The ISF is charged with providing security to UNMIT, and it is vital that planning for the future of those two core components of the international security presence continue to be closely coordinated.

New Zealand assures the Security Council of its continuing support for and encouragement to the leaders and the people of Timor-Leste and to Mr. Khare and his UNMIT team. We thank the Council for its ongoing support for Timor-Leste and Viet Nam for presiding over today's discussions.

Amid the chaos and violence of 10 years ago, it was hard to see the prospect of the new nation that is emerging today. The security, social, economic and governance challenges of the past decade have been faced and largely met. Timor-Leste can now take up with some confidence the further challenges of developing the institutions of statehood and national democratic, representative Government, of creating credible mechanisms for ensuring justice and the protection of human rights, and of building a strong and sustainable economy. In the spirit of cooperation of those 10 years, New Zealand shares and takes some quiet pride in all those developments and in having helped and supported the emergence of this new member of the international family of free and independent nations.

The President: I now call on the representative of Australia.

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): Australia welcomes the opportunity to participate once again in the Security Council's deliberations on Timor-Leste. We particularly welcome the participation of Deputy Prime Minister Guterres today. We congratulate Timor-Leste on its recent tenth anniversary of the United Nations-sponsored popular consultation, and we endorses the statement issued by the President of the Security Council on 27 August, which reaffirmed the Council's support for the efforts of the people and the Government of Timor-Leste and for the work of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) in fulfilling its mandate. The effective implementation of that mandate continues to be vital.

For Australia's part, we remain a steadfast friend of Timor-Leste and will continue to contribute what we can to international efforts to assist it in becoming a stable and prosperous nation. We welcome the positive developments in the security situation since the 11 February 2008 attacks on President Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Gusmão — developments recently demonstrated in the successful local Suko elections held on 9 October, which took place with only minor and isolated security incidents. Equally pleasing has been the closure of the last of the camps housing internally displaced persons. We congratulate the Government of Timor-Leste and others involved on that achievement.

However, we recognize that the closure of those camps is only the first step in the reintegration process. The return of significant numbers of people to communities with limited infrastructure and other support services presents new risks and challenges. Certainly Australia will continue to support efforts by the Timorese Government to ensure the long-term sustainability of the return and reintegration process.

The Australian-led International Security Force (ISF) has commenced a shift in focus from a purely security support role to one of defence cooperation with Timor-Leste's military to support the work of Australia's own bilateral Defence Cooperation Programme. We wish to acknowledge the significant cooperation of UNMIT and other international partners with the ISF. In particular, we wish to express our appreciation to New Zealand for its contribution.

In addition to the work of the Defence Cooperation Programme, Australia's bilateral Timor-Leste Police Development Programme is working closely with the Government and the National Police of Timor-Leste (PNTL) to develop its capacity. While

good progress has been and continues to be made, the United Nations role on the ground in Timor-Leste in this area in particular remains significant and quite crucial. A major development this year has been the commencement of the handover of policing responsibility from the United Nations police to the PNTL. The process mutually agreed between the Government of Timor-Leste and UNMIT is for the handover to be done gradually, with each district and specialized unit required to meet a set of objective criteria. That has resulted, as we know, in three districts and one unit being handed back to the PNTL to date.

We very much support that joint approach, which not only ensures a controlled and orderly handover, but also provides valuable information to international partners as to the critical needs of the PNTL. We support the view expressed in the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/504) that continued monitoring by UNMIT will be critical in this respect and that Timor-Leste and UNMIT are at the beginning of a delicate process — as the report says — of handover on which we should not impose a predetermined artificial timeline.

The development of the justice sector has continued with the addition of more judges, public defenders and public prosecutors. District courts are now functioning and providing increased judicial services to the rural population. Australia continues to support the development of the justice sector, as do others. While progress overall in that sector has been positive, the clear principle of separation of powers must be kept in mind at all times to ensure a strong and independent judiciary.

Of course, the Government and the people of Timor-Leste will themselves continue to take primary responsibility for the development of a stable and prosperous nation, including through institutional and economic reform, the development of the private sector and the provision of infrastructure, health and education services and housing. The Secretary-General's report recognizes, however, that many of the underlying factors contributing to the 2006 crisis — poverty, lack of an effective land regime, weakness in the justice sector and still-nascent security institutions — remain.

In support of capacity-building to address those and other challenges, Australia is finalizing a new country strategy for development assistance to Timor-Leste for the next five years. It will reflect a tighter and more explicit focus around priorities that have been clearly identified by the Government of Timor-Leste itself. Our aid programme under the new strategy, which of course is conditional on Timor-Leste's approval, will likely focus on delivering services — particularly in child and maternal health — in rural areas; creating training and employment opportunities for young men and women, a crucial task; improving food security; and assisting with capacity-building within the institutions and the Government of Timor-Leste itself.

A positive development has been progress in institutional reform supported by donors. Those developments include the establishment of a public service commission and the adoption of legislation to establish an anti-corruption commission, both of which are significant landmarks.

As a significant donor to Timor-Leste and mindful of the broad and complex range of development cooperation taking place, we look forward to continuing to work in partnership with the Government of Timor-Leste and closely with other development partners, including the United Nations in all its forms, to ensure a carefully coordinated approach.

It is axiomatic that the international community, led by the United Nations, will continue to support Timor-Leste as it moves towards more effective and sustainable governance arrangements. For our part, we remain committed to continuing our own strong support for Timor-Leste during this important period of transition.

In concluding, I would like to commend the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Atul Khare, not just for his professional contribution — which we expect — but also for his impressive personal commitment to Timor-Leste. We have all been present at a point in history that has seen the emergence of this new nation, and Mr. Khare and his United Nations team have been a very significant part of that history.

The President: I now call on the representative of the Philippines.

Mr. Davide (Philippines): At the outset, the Philippines congratulates you, Mr. President, on Viet

Nam's successful leadership of the Council, an undoubted testament to its fidelity to the legacy of last year's successful presidency, and thanks you for convening this important meeting to discuss the situation in Timor-Leste.

My country welcomes back Deputy Prime Minister José Luis Guterres and thanks him for his important statement this morning. We also thank the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Atul Khare, for presenting the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/504) on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). Once again, the Special Representative has given us a front-row view, even an eyewitness account, of how the United Nations is conducting successful peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations in Timor-Leste. The Philippines also notes that Mr. Khare's tour of duty with UNMIT ends in December and acknowledges the exemplary work he has done in the past three years as head of UNMIT and in his previous capacities as Chief of Staff and Deputy Special Representative in earlier peacekeeping operations in Timor-Leste. The Philippines wishes him all the best in his future endeavours.

The Philippines also associates itself with the statement delivered by Thailand on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). We would, nonetheless, like to stress some points.

The Philippines' special relationship and solidarity with Timor-Leste date back to the latter's formative years. The Philippines started its involvement in 1999 with a 600-strong humanitarian support mission as part of the International Force in East Timor, and has deployed a significant number of personnel in every United Nations mission in Timor-Leste from that time until the present. The majority of its individual police officers are in UNMIT. The Philippines continues to be committed to Timor-Leste's nation-building efforts through, inter alia, bilateral arrangements for assistance and cooperation in capacity-building, working with various relevant groups and institutions in Timor-Leste, and remains a member of the Core Group on Timor-Leste.

As such, the Philippines is heartened to note that developments in all aspects of Timor-Leste's nationhood have been very positive and encouraging since the last Security Council meeting on the subject in February. Highlights in this area include the successful celebration of the tenth anniversary of the popular referendum in an atmosphere of continuing safety and stability, for which the people of Timor-Leste and its State institutions, with the support of UNMIT and the United Nations country team, should be commended. Another such example is the resumption on 14 May of primary policing responsibilities by the Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL). The international community, through the United Nations and bilateral donors, should provide long-term assistance to support the PNTL and the Timorese Government in reconstituting and developing the police force.

There has also been progress in efforts to enhance democratic governance by establishing anti-corruption and civil service commissions and by ratifying the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Significant progress has also been made in meeting targets for the national priorities set forth in the international compact for Timor-Leste (see S/2008/501, para. 36). Development partners should endeavour to reinforce the Government's commitment to the priorities in order to ensure that the high degree of compliance in meeting targets for the first and second quarters of this year will be sustained.

The Philippines acknowledges the comprehensive role that UNMIT and the United Nations country team have played and will continue to play in promoting peace and development in Timor-Leste. It is imperative that the international community continue to express its strong support for their work. A case in point is the resumption of primary policing responsibilities. UNMIT's presence is still necessary to ensure that the gradual takeover of policing responsibilities by the PNTL continues to go smoothly. The Philippines fully concurs with the observation in paragraph 58 of the Secretary-General's report that UNMIT's present strength and composition should be maintained.

The path to nationhood is never smooth. Looking back, we have seen Timor-Leste toiling through tragedies and triumphs, sufferings and joy. The Philippines congratulates the people and Government of Timor-Leste for their courage, determination and faith. Their spirit of hope is outstanding. Thus far, we can say with certainty that with the character and idealism of the Timorese people, the time, effort and resources that the international community has invested in Timor-Leste have been worth it.

The experience in Timor-Leste is still definitely one of the best examples of a successful international

enterprise engineered through the combined cooperative efforts of the United Nations, regional players and partners. The Timorese leadership has remained focused on being proactive in promoting democracy and the rule of law and on enhancing stability, security, development and progress in a way that is sustainable and consistent with the needs of the Timorese people. It is incumbent on us to be relentless and enduring in our support to them to help maintain this positive attitude. As the saying goes, "When the only tool you own is a hammer, every problem begins to resemble a nail."

Mr. Sangqu (South Africa): Thank you very much, Mr. President, for organizing this meeting. We thank the Secretary-General for his latest report (S/2009/504) on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), and we are also grateful to Mr. Atul Khare, the Secretary-General's Special Representative, for his briefing today. We also welcome the personal presence and participation here of Mr. Guterres, the Deputy Prime Minister of Timor-Leste.

South Africa is pleased with the progress made by Timor-Leste since the 2006 crisis. Both the people and the political leadership of Timor-Leste have risen to overcome those events, and have ultimately made many strides towards restoring normalcy and bringing sustainable peace and stability to their country. We particularly applaud the personal efforts and leadership of President Ramos-Horta. South Africa welcomes the positive developments in Timor-Leste as reflected in the current report of the Secretary-General, which include progress in security, dialogue and reconciliation, as well as in amicably resolving the issues of the petitioners and internally displaced persons. My delegation supports continued efforts to foster dialogue and national reconciliation at both the national and the local levels among various stakeholders in Timor-Leste.

We congratulate the Government and people of Timor-Leste on their celebration of the important milestone of the tenth anniversary of the popular referendum, as noted in paragraph 3 of the report. My delegation is also encouraged that most of the country's critical challenges, such as the issue of the petitioners and internally displaced persons, have been resolved in an amicable manner, and we welcome the efforts made by the Government of Timor-Leste to address the outstanding challenges.

South Africa underlines the continued importance of a holistic and comprehensive approach to the review and reform of the security sector in Timor-Leste under the full national ownership of the country. We encourage the Government of Timor-Leste to continue to intensify and enhance its efforts towards developing a national security policy. My delegation also reiterates its backing for the protection and promotion of democratic governance, human rights and justice in Timor-Leste. We support the increased efforts to strengthen the country's security and justice institutions. In this context, we note with appreciation the gradual resumption of primary policing responsibilities in some districts by the national police.

We believe that the significant strides made thus far in Timor-Leste now require that its people, in partnership with the international community, must focus on the economic development of the country. Peace must be anchored in development. We therefore support the measures taken by the Timorese Government to further improve basic education and health and to enhance rural development. The bilateral and multilateral partners should align their support and programmes with the Government's development strategies and priorities.

We continue to reiterate our view that the international community must make a long-term commitment to assist the Government of Timor-Leste to achieve sustainable peace and prosperity. It is also crucial that bilateral and multilateral partners continue to assist the country to develop and strengthen its institutions and further build capacities in various sectors, in line with the country's prosperities. For their part, the leadership of Timor-Leste should continue to seize the opportunity to work with all segments of society in building national unity, reconciliation, promotion of human rights, justice and peace.

I wish to conclude by paying tribute to Mr. Atul Khare for his excellent service in UNMIT and, above all, for his dedication to the people of Timor-Leste. We wish to commend the invaluable work of UNMIT under his leadership.

South Africa, working with other partners, is ready to join the international community to assist the people of Timor-Leste in their effort to consolidate the progress made so far. We are convinced that Timor-Leste can succeed only to the extent to which the

international community provides political support and much-needed resources for development.

The President: I shall now give the floor to Mr. Khare to make a further statement in response to comments from the floor.

Mr. Khare: I would like to begin by communicating my sincerest thanks to all the speakers for the very strong support expressed for the observations contained in the report of the Secretary-General, particularly that the present strength and composition of UNMIT should be maintained while awaiting the recommendations of the technical assessment mission, which will be valuable in the formulation of proposals for possible adjustments, to be contained in the Secretary-General's next report, in February 2010.

Several speakers also reiterated the Secretary-General's recommendation regarding the need for stronger civilian oversight of the F-FDTL and the PNTL and for differentiation of their roles and responsibilities. I wish to assure the Security Council that the authorities of Timor-Leste are cognizant of those requirements and that UNMIT — and indeed, the entire United Nations family — will continue to assist them in implementing those two recommendations.

I was also grateful for the strong support for the Secretary-General's observation regarding the need to strengthen the rule of law, promote greater accountability and fight impunity. Again, I am pleased to inform the Council that the authorities of Timor-Leste are committed in that regard, and so is the United Nations committed to supporting the efforts of Timor-Leste to achieve a greater degree of accountability and to strengthen the rule of law.

I was also delighted to note several indications of continued bilateral and multilateral support for Timor-Leste from all the Member States. I wish to assure the Council that the United Nations will continue to work with those bilateral and multilateral partners to ensure that under the leadership of the Government and authorities of Timor-Leste the people have the required resources for success in socio-economic development, security sector reform, strengthening the rule of law and promoting democratic governance.

Finally, allow me to say how touched I have been by the very kind words directed to my team and, indeed, to myself.

The President: There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.